CALICUT UNIVERSITY SANSKRIT SERIES No. 2

MĪMĀMSĀ CONTRIBUTION TO LANGUAGE STUDIES

By

Dr. K. KUNJUNNIRAJA

DEPARTMENT OF SANSKRIT
UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT
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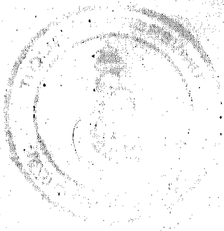




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PREFACE

It is a matter of great pleasure for the Department of Sanskrit to publish the first 'Prof. M. S. Menon Endowment Lectures' in a book form. This is the second book in the 'Calicut University Sanskrit Series', the first being *The Catalogue of Manuscripts.*

The Department of Sanskrit started in 1977. Prof. M. S. Menon, a renowned scholar-critic and the founder head of the Department, retired from service on 30th September 1985. Then his colleagues and students decided to raise a fund to start a series of annual endowment lectures on different topics of Sanskrit language and literature and Indian Philosophy. With the encouragement showered on them by the University authorities, especially the then Vice-Chancellor Mr. T. N. Jayachandran, 'Prof. M. S. Menon Endowment' was instituted soon. Dr. K. Kunjunni Raja, Hon. Director of the Adyar Library and Research Centre, was invited to deliver the first 'Prof. M. S. Menon Endowment Lectures' on "Mīmāṃsā Contribution to Language Studies" on 14th, 15th and 16th October 1986.

The various systems of Indian Philosophy have made substantial contribution to Linguistics and allied disciplines. Of these systems Mīmāṃsā stands in the forefront. Dr. Raja had already discussed many points in regard to this in his *Indian Theories of Meaning* and *Language of Poetry* and in a good number of research papers. In this booklet he deals with the contribution of Mīmāṃsā to language studies in a succint manner. The definition of the word 'Mīmāṃsā' is discussed first. This is followed by a brief survey of important Mīmāṃsā works, along with the main theories of interpretations according to that philosophy. Then Dr. Raja gives us a general idea of the attitude of Mīmāṃsā towards language and Kumārilabhaṭṭa's observations on foreign loan words in Sanskrit. Theories of sentence meaning put forward by eminent

Mīmāṃsakas are discussed in some detail in the last section of the work.

I am profoundly grateful to the University authorities for allotting sufficient fund for publishing these endowment lectures. Thanks are due to Dr. Kunjunni Raja for delivering the lectures and giving permission for including this work in the Calicut University Sanskrit Series. I am thankful to my colleagues in the Department of Sanskrit for their active co-operation in all the works of the Department, especially for the help extended by them in conducting the Endowment Lectures and printing this booklet.

C. U. Campus,
15. 3. 1988.

Dr. N. V. P. UNITHIRI
Head, Department of Sanskrit

MĪMĀMSĀ CONTRIBUTION TO LANGUAGE STUDIES

The Pūrvamīmāṃsā, briefly called Mīmāmsā, and the Uttaramīmāṃsā, well known as Vedānta, form two among the six systems of orthodox Hindu darśanas. The term *mīmāṃsā* means "full discussion", "reflection" or "investigation". It is of interest to note that neither Jaimini, author of the Sūtras, nor Śabara, author of the Bhāṣya, refers to the system by the term *Mīmāṃsā*. The term *nyaya* or maxims is often used as a synonym and the Mīmāṃsakas are raferred to as *Nyāyavidaḥ*. The term *Mīmāṃsā* is used to the system perhaps for the first time in the *Yājñvalkyasmṛti* (Ist Cent. A. D.)

Purāṇanyāyamīmāṃsādharmaśāstrāṅgamisritāḥ /
vedāḥ sthānāni vidyānām dharmasya ca caturdāśa // (1. 3)

Kumārilabhaṭṭa calls it Mīmāṃsā and says that the methods and modalities of the investigation of dharma will be done by Mīmāṃsā.

Dharme pramīyamāṇe hi vedena karaṇātmanā /
itikartavyatābhāgam mīmāṃsā pūrayiṣyati //

The pre-Śamkara Buddhist writers like Dignāga and Bhavya (580 A. D.) also refer to the system by the term *Mīmāṃsā*.

The term Mīmāṃsā

The term *Mīmāṃsā* in the sense of "investigation" is found used in Early Vedic literature itself without any reference to the system: *Saiṣā ānandasya mīmāṃsā bhavati* (*Tai. Up.* II.8) "*mahāśrotriyāḥ sametya mīmāṃsām cakruḥ*" (*Ch.Up.* V. XI. 1) The Śrauta sūtras also use the term in the general sense of discussion and investigation.

Incidentally it may be noted that the term *mīmāṃsā*, derived from *mā* to measure though having the suffix *san* is not desi-

derative in sense. The desiderative sense for *san* is given by Pāṇini in the rule *dhātoḥ samānakartṛkād icchāyām* (III. 1. 7.; two rules giving *san* suffix to some roots are given before this sūtra: "*guptij kidbhyaḥ*" *san* and "*manbadhadānśanbhyo dirghaś-cābhyāsasya*" (III. 1. 5–6). Hence the forms of words *jugupsa, titikṣa, cikitsa, mīmāṃsā* etc are sanctioned, but the meaning is not given. It is Kātyāyana who supplies the meaning: *mānerj jñāsāyām*.

Interpretation

"The importance of the Mīmāṃsā system is not as a system of metaphysics, but as a school which has developed the methodology for interpreting rules, and made intimate investigation into the various problems in the philosophy of speech". According to the method adopted in the *Mīmāṃsā sūtra* every argument has five parts: presentation of subject under discussion (*viṣaya*), expression of the existing doubt (*saṃśaya*), the *prima facie* view of the opponent (*pūrvapakṣa*), the reply to it and the final view (*siddhanta*), and consistency in all related sentences (*saṃgati*). This method became quite popular in all other schools also.

To understand the intended purport of a passage or a whole book, the Mīmāṃsā accepted six principles:

upakramopasaṃhārāv abhyāso 'pūrvatā phalam /
arthavādopapattī ca liṅgam tātparyanirṇaye //

1) Consistency in the meaning between the introduction and the conclusion 2) repetition of the main topic 3) the novelty of the subject matter 4) the result intended 5) corroborative and eulogistic remarks as distinguished from the main theme and 6) arguments in favour of the main topic. The Mīmāṃsakas maintain that the purport of a passage can be obtained objectively with the help of contextual factors without considering the intention of the speaker. While dealing with the prose passages in the *Yajurveda* where it is sometimes found difficult to ascertain how far a certain sentence extended; the Mīmāṃsakas evolved the principle of syntactic unity or

ekavākyatā. "So long as a single purpose is served by a number of words, which on being separated are found to be wanting and incapable of effecting the said purpose, they form one syntactic unit - one complete *mantra*. Śabara in his *Bhāṣya* explains the sūtra as referring to the Vedic mantras only, and the term *arthaikatva* is interpreted in the sense of "serving a single purpose" (*ekaprayojanatvād upapannam*.)

Mīmāṃsā, also called the Pūrva mīmāṃsā, is one of the well known six systems of orthodox Hindu philosophy, and is mainly concerned with the cogent interpretation of the Vedic texts relating to the rituals as given in the *Śrauta Sūtras*. Another important orthodox school of philosophy is the Vedānta school, also called Uttara mīmāṃsā, or Śārīraka mīmāṃsā, which is equally interested in the cogent interpretation of Vedic texts. The terms *Pūrva* and *uttara* refer to Part I and Part II, and have no diachronic significance of the former being earlier than the latter.

The aim of the Pūrva mīmāṃsā is to investigate into the nature of dharma: *athāto dharmajijñāsa*; this *dharma* is explained as those religious acts, commanded by the Brāhmaṇa texts, to be performed: *codanālakṣaṇo'rtho dharmaḥ*. The Vedānta or Uttara mīmāṃsā school, on the other hand, aims at the investigation into the nature of Brahman or the ultimate Reality: *athāto brahmajijñāsa*. Hence while the Pūrva mīmāṃsā considers as primary Vedic passages, the rules issuing a command to the human beings to perform religious acts, the Vedānta is mainly interested in the Upaniṣadic statements which speak of ātmān's identity with Brahman.

The basic text of the Pūrvamīmāṃsā is the *Mīmaṃsa sūtras* of Jaimini (c. 300 B. C.) on which Śabara (c. A. D. 200) wrote an elaborate Bhāṣya. Two different schools, the Bhāṭṭa and the Prābhākara, were founded towards the close of the sixth Century and the beginning of the seventh Century by Kumārilabhaṭṭa and Prabhākara respectively, based on differing interpretations of Śabara's *Bhāṣya*. Kumārilabhaṭṭa wrote the metrical *Ślokavārtika* commentary on the first part

of the first chapter of the original text and the *Bhāṣya*, the *Tantravārttika* on the further portion till the end of the third chapter, mainly in prose, but with verses interspersed throughout, and the brief *Ṭupṭīkā* on the rest. It is said that he later wrote the *Bṛhaṭṭīkā* to meet the criticisms raised by Dharmakīrti in his *Pramāṇavārttika*. Prabhākara's well known work is the *Bṛhatī* and the *Laghvī* on *Śabarabhāṣya*. Later writers on the Bhāṭṭa school include Pārthasārathi miśra (c. A. D. 1050), author of the *Śastradīpika* and the *Nyāyaratnamālā* and Someśvara(c. A. D.1200) author of the *Nyāyasudhā*. The Prābhākara school found an able exponent in Śālikanātha (c. A. D. 800), commentator on the *Bṛhatī* and author of the independent *Prakaraṇapañcikā*. *Tattvabindu* by Vācaspatimiśra (850 A. D.) and the *Mānameyodaya* by two scholars of Kerala with the name Nārāyaṇa (c. A. D. 1600 and c. A. D. 1650) discuss epistemological and linguistic problems. The *Nītitattvāvirbhāva* of Cidānanda (A D. 1300) which has a commentary by Parameśvara is also an important work.

One of the most influential schools of philosophy at the time of Śaṃkara was the Mīmāṃsā school and Śaṃkara emphatically denies the utility of the *karmamārga* for final release; but the attitude of early Vedānta scholars does not seem to be so severe against the Mīmāṃsakas. Jaimini and Śabarasvāmin did not take any interest in the problem of final release, but later writers had to take it into consideration. Das Gupta has suggested that the Vaiśeṣika system, which is also interested in the investigation of the *dharma*, but defines it as that which leads to happiness in this world and thereafter *yato'bhyudayaniśreyasasiddhiḥ*, represented an earlier school of Mīmāṃsā. In the early period there was not much conflict between the Pūrvamīmāṃsā and the Vedānta. Kumārila, Prabhākara and Maṇḍanamiśra advocated their special types of *jñānakarmasamuccaya* theories, trying to bring together the paths of action and knowledge. Among the Vedāntins Brahmānandin, Bhartṛprapañca and Bhāskara advocated *jñānakarmasamuccaya*. However in his Advaita system Śaṃkara was vehemently critical of the earlier views

and rejected *karma* altogether as a means for final release. Śaṃkara held that the world is an illusion felt by man because of his innate ignorance, and that this ignorance can be removed only by knowledge, and not by actions Release is only the realization of one's identity with the ultimate reality Brahman: actually there is no release, but only the realization that he is always free, being one with Brahman. The Mīmāṃsakas on the other hand tried to explain *mokṣa* or release in their own way. They say that there are four kinds of action ordained by the scriptures. Compulsory acts or *nityakarmas* are to be performed by householders; these do not produce any positive result, but their nonperformance will produce evil consequences. The second type of religious act are occasional and specific to be performed on the fullmoon day etc.; they are also similar. The third type of religious acts are called *kāmyakarmas*, optional acts to be performed if some specific results are intended. The fourth type of acts is constituted of prohibitions; if performed they will bring sin to the doer. The Mīmāṃsakas argue that by performing the first two types of acts, and avoiding the other two, one can avoid the results of past *karmas* and attain the goal of supreme happiness which is *mokṣa*. When the cause of misery is removed, the mind is able to enjoy the bliss which is the real nature of the soul, as indicated by the scriptural passages like *ānandam brahmaṇo rūpam; tacca mokso 'bhivyajyate*. The *Mānameyodaya* puts it clearly thus:

Niṣiddhakāmyakarmabhyaḥ samyak vyāvṛttacetasaḥ /
nityanaimittikaprāyascittapradhvastaduṣkṛteḥ //
Sukhaduḥkhānubhūtibhyām kṣīṇaprārabdhakarmaṇaḥ /
yuktasya brahmacaryādyair aṅgaiḥ śamadamādibhiḥ //
kurvāṇasyātmamīmāṃsām vedāntoktena vartmanā /
muktiḥ sampady sadyo nityāate nandaprakāsinī. //

For one whose mind is well withdrawn from the prohibited and optional rituals, whose sins are destroyed by the obligatory and occasional rituals and by expiatory rites, whose *karmans* that have begun to take effect are exhausted

through the experience of happiness and misery, who is endowed with *Brahmacarya* and subsidiaries like calmness, equanimity etc., who starts investigating the real nature of Ātman along the path declared in the Vedānta, final release comes immediately, manifesting eternal bliss.

Though Śaṃkara attacks the *karmamārga*, he does not say that the religious acts ordained in the Vedas are completely useless; because he has to accept the validity of all Vedic passages. If performed with detachment, they are helpful in purifying the mind; they also restrain man from his natural impulses and desire for worldly pleasure. In the *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* (1.49) Sureśvara puts it in a succinct manner:

Pratyak pravaṇatām buddheḥ karmāṇyutpādya śuddhitaḥ /
kṛtārthāny astam āyāti prāvṛḍante ghanāv iva. /

Śaṃkara himself says in the *Upadeśasāhasrī* (1. 17. 22) "When the mind becomes pure like a mirror, knowledge shines forth; therefore (the mind should be purified). The mind is purified by abstention, the permanent rites, sacrifices and austerities". (Mayeda's translation)

Even when disagreeing with the views of Mīmāṃsakas Śaṃkara accepted the method of interpretation of sentences as evolved by the Mīmāṃsakas in arriving at the cogent meanings intended.

Attitude towards Language

Often there has been some misunderstanding regarding the Mīmāṃsā attitude towards language. The Mīmāṃsā insistence on the enternal relationship between words and their meanings might have originated in their concern for the preservation of the Vedas and their authoritative position; but they were consistent in their approach, and were never afraid of arguing problems to their logical conclusions and accepting them even when they are not fully palatable to them. The sūtra *autpattikas to śabdaśyārthena sambandhah* is a general principle accepted on the basis of the *pravāha nityatā*; they were not concerned with the ultimate origin of

the relationship between words and their meanings; to them it was impossible to conceive of a society without a language. We learn our language from our parents and elders; they in their turn must have learned it from their forefathers; thus it could be traced back from generation to generation to any conceivable period of human society. What the Mīmāṃsakas meant by the eternality of the relation between words and their meanings is that it is not possible to trace the origin of this relation to a person. The term *autpattika* used in this sūtra is noteworthy; it is derived from *utpatti* or "origin"; it suggests the view that a word is a word only when it has a meaning, that from the beginning of the word, its association with its meaning is also there. This principle of the eternality of the relationship between words and their meanings is not confined to the Vedic language and to classical Sanskrit, but extends to all languages including the *Mlecchabhāṣās*. Dr. M. M. Deshpande says in his book *Sociolinguistic Attitudes in India* (p. 18) that this Mīmāṃsāka conception of eternality of *Śabdārthasambandha* "is not a universal principle, but it applied only to Sanskrit". This cannot be true in the case of early Mīmāṃsakas, for the principle of *Pravāhanityatā* is applicable to all natural languages, including the *Mleccha* languages.

In the case of the substandard speech or Apabhraṃśa from which the Prākrit languages were considered to have been evolved, the change in language in form as well as meaning is taken into account. In the case of such Apabhraṃśa words the corrupt forms of words, which have gained currenc, among the people, express their meanings only indirectly by manifesting the potentiality of the original correct words through their similarity with them. Such corrupt forms originate owing to the discrepancy of the speakers, but due to long usage people may in course of time mistake them as correct words. Still they cannot be considered as synonyms for the original words. Kumārila says:

Ananyagatikatvena sā dṛdhasmaraṇena ca /
ekaśaktyanusāreṇa yāvat tvasti gatiḥ kvacit //
upamānānumānābhyām tāvat saivānugamyate //
Tantravārtika on 1. 3. 26

Foreign Loan Words

In the discussion on foreign loan words in Vedic or classical Sanskrit, the views of Mīmāṃsakas seem to be refreshingly modern and show a keen awareness of linguistic problems. While discussing sūtra 1. 3. 10 it is admitted by Śabara and Kumārila that certain words that are used in the Vedas are not in use among the Āryas, i. e. in classical Sanskrit, but are found in the *Mleccha* language. The question raised is whether we should accept for these words the meanings given to them by the *Mlecchas* in their language, or whether these words should be interpreted by u ing Sanskrit etymology. On this problem the *prima facie* view presented by Śabara and Kumārila is as follows : Internal Sanskritic interpretation based on etymology and grammar is to be preferred to the *Mleccha* usage. The orthodox Vedic Brahmins even stop their recitation of the Vedic texts if they see a *Mleccha*; then how can a *Mleccha* usage be accepted as authority to explain a Sanskrit word? The Brahmins of Āryāvarta who are the elites or *Śiṣṭas* are prohibited from communicating with the *Mlecchas* and hence how could they know the *Mleccha* meaning of a word? It is less troublesome to find internal etymology based on Sanskrit roots and suffixes than examine the entire *Mleccha* usage :

yeṣām darśanamātre'pi veda eva na paṭhyate /
sambhāṣāpi ca na mleechaiḥ sahāryāvarta vāsinām //
na cāsti samskṛtaḥ śabdaḥ kaścin mleceāpabhāṣaṇe /
samskṛtapratirūpā hi tattad bhāṣāntare sthitā //
aryāś ca mlecchabhāṣābhyaḥ kalpayantaḥ svakam padam /
padāntarākṣaropetam kalpayanti kadācana //
nyūnākṣaram kadācicca prakṣipanty adhikākṣaram //

In this context Kumārilabhaṭṭa refers to the attempt of some overzealous Āryans to derive even pure Dravidian words like *vayar* "stomach", *Cor* "cooked rice", etc. from Sanskrit roots. He criticizes such misinterpretations, though the *prima facie* view is that *Mleccha* words must be interpreted by taking recourse to internal etymology and grammatical analysis.

"In the case of Dravidian words ending in consonants, some Āryans consider them as Sanskrit words by adding necessary vowel affixes : *cor* "rice", *atar* "road", *pāp* "snake", *māl* "woman", and *vair* "stomach" are taken to equivalents of the Sanskrit words *coraḥ* "thief", *ataraḥ* "difficult to cross" *pāpaḥ* "evil" *mālā* "garland" and *vairiḥ* "anemy" respectively. They try to explain the etymology by reference to the meaning attached to the Sanskrit words and farfetched associations". Kumārila attacks at such ridiculous attempts at arbitrary derivation of foreign words from Sanskrit roots on the basis of some similarity of sound and farfetched meaning association.

The final view of the Mīmamsakas is quite in keeping with the modern linguistic approach. If a word is no more found used in classical Sanskrit (the language of Āryāvarta) and is found used by the *Mlecchas*, then we have to accept the sense in which it is employed by them. Kumārila says; *kālpanikyāḥ prasidhaśca ya kḷptā sā balīyasī*(*Tantravārttika* p.277). This is consistent with their view *yogād rūḍhir balīyasī* "popular usage is more authoritative than the etymological sense".

Thus we find that the *Mleccha* usage of *Mleccha* words is as authoritative and as eternal(through *pravāhanityatā*)as the Āryan usage of Sanskrit words. After ridiculing the arbitrary Sanskrit etymologies attempted for some Dravidian words by some purists, Kumārila bhaṭṭa remarks, "If such arbitrary assumptions (*Svacchandakalpanās*) are resorted to even in Dravidian words what funny etymologies will such extremists not attempt in the cases of loanwords from Pārasika, Yavana, Barbara and Romaka languages ; it may be noted that in the case of some Greek loan words in the field of astronomy, such attempts had already been made - as in deriving *horā* from *ahorātra* with the initial and final syllables dropped, as pointed out by Varāhamihira.

Even among Naiyāyikas there were some who considered the Mlecchabhāṣā as important and ancient as Sanskrit itself. Annambhaṭṭa says in his commentary *Uddyotinī* on Kaiyaṭā's *Mahabhāṣyapradīpa* thus. "There is no reason to believe that

only Sanskrit was created by God at the time of creation. When the Yavanas etc. were created, their language was also created. We do not have any evidence to show that these Yavanas also first used Sanskrit, and only later shifted to their own language.

It is, however, true that some people believed that Sanskrt- is the only eternal language. In the 15 th century work *Lilātila-kam* on Malayalam language and literature, it is stated that *Samskrta* is *anādi* (eternal) and that all other languages are derived from it.

Kumārilabhaṭṭa says that *Mleccha* usage must prevail in the case of loan words like *patrorṇa* "a silk garment", and *vāravāṇa* "armour" where the articles are imported from the foreign country. When the same word is used by the Āryans and *Mlecchas* in different meanings, both are to be taken as equally authoritative. Śabara says ; *ubhayathā padārthāvagamād vikalpaḥ.* Thus the words *yava, vetasa* and *varāha* are used in the sense of "barley", "cane" and "boar" respectively by the Āryans, and "long pepper", "black berry" and "crow" respecti-vely by the *Mlecchas*. Discussing this *Bhāṣya* passage Kumārila bhaṭṭa says that the latter meanings reffered to as *Mleccha* usages are not found anywhere and that there is no need to argue about imaginary things :

Naivocyante kvacid deśe yavaśrutyā priyaṃgavaḥ /
jambūm na vetasam prāhur varāham vāpi vāyasam //
adhyāropya vicāreṇa kim mudhā khidyate manaḥ //

This shows that by the time of Kumārila bhaṭṭa, the latter set of meanings had become obsolete, though Kumārila bhaṭṭa did not recognize that the latter set of meanings has been lost in course of time.

The word *pīlu* meant a kind of tree in Sanskrit but it meant "an elephant" to the *Mlecchas*. While interpreting ancient texts like the Vedas the use of the word in other contexts has also to be taken into consideration.

Mīmāmsā discussions on foreign words indicates their awareness of the existence of foreign loan words in classical

Sanskrit and the possibility of foreign words even in the Vedas It may be noted that the grammarians were concerned with the problem of substandard speech as against the accepted elite or *śiṣṭa* pronunciation. The term *Mleccha* was originally used to substandard speech as in *brāhaṇmena na mlekchitavai.* With the development of the substandard speech into independent dia-lects and Prakrits, even the brahmins began to use substandard dialect in their ordinary life, but retained meticulously the correct pronunciation in rituals. The need for preserving the *mantras* intact against the inroads of Prakritic influence of their colloquial speech was felt and specific rules were made, and *brāhmaṇena mlecchitavai* was interpreted as applying only to their ritualistic behaviour. There was no objection to the Brahmins using colloquial substandard speech in their everyday life. Patañjali refers to the Ṛṣis, nick named Yarvāṇastarvāṇaḥ, because they pronounced *yadvanaḥ* and *tadvānaḥ* as *yarvāṇaḥ* and *tarvāṇah* respectively, though they were correct in their ritualistic behaviour.

Sentence Meaning

Studies on sentences are often based on statements or propositions; this is true especially in the case of logicians both in India and in the west. A corrective to this undue importance given to sentences of the statement type is affo-rded by the Mīmāṃsā preoccupation with the injunction of Vedic texts with regard to religious duties. The Veda is acc-epted as authoritative means of valid knowledge; but accor-ding to the Pūrvamīmāṃsā only the *Codanāvākyas* or inju-ntive sentences (consisting of both positive and negative in-junctions *vidhi* and *pratiṣedha*) in the Brāhmaṇa portion of the Vedas which enjoin human beings to do certain religious acts and to refrain from doing certain acts are to be con-sidered as Pramāṇa directly. The validity of other portions such as the *Upaniṣads* where sentences of the propositional type are predominant get their validity only by taking them as supplementing the injunctive sentences as *vākyaśeṣa* or as *arthavāda.* Only those sentences that convey something new not known by any other means (*ajñatārthajñapaka*) which are called injunctive sentences or *codanāvākyas* are directly

valid; other sentences constituting the narrative part of the Vedas (*ākhyānas*), or eulogistic of an event, thing or action, have no selfvalidity as they are only affirming or repeating ideas. They are *arthavādas* and are to be interpreted along with injunctive sentences. Even the *Saṃhitā* portions of the Vedas have no self-validity according to the Mīmāṃsakas since they are in the nature of praises of the deities or invocations to them. Similarly even the Upaniṣadic passages declaring certain facts regarding the nature of man, and reality have no self-validity according to them. But the Vedāntins do not agree with this view since according to them the Upaniṣadic passages of the statement type like the Mahāvākyas are self-valid.

It may be noted that the Nyāyaśāstra or logic which later became very much interested in the study of sentences, did not discuss the sentence or the sentence meaning till the middle ages, and Jayantabhaṭṭa says in the *Nyāyamañjari* that the absence of any discussion of the sentence meaning in the *Nyāyasūtra* suggests that according to the early Naiyāyikas the sentence meaning is only the sum of the word-meanings. Even Pāṇini, the great grammarian, confines his attention to the analysis of words into its components; it is only later grammarians like Kātyāyana who accepted the syntactic definition of a sentence as that containing finite verb (*ekatiṅ vākyam*) Pāṇini seems to have followed the Vedic tradition of the Mīmāṃsā, allowing more than one finite verb for a single sentence.

It is the Mīmāṃsā school that started a detailed study of sentences and developed elaborate canons of interpretation. Even this study was mainly on the basis of individual words and the word-meanings, and consequently the relation ship between the words and the sentence constituted by them, and between word-meaning and the sentence-meaning remained the central problem. The Mīmāṃsā school first enunciated and the other schools of thought later accepted with minor modifications the three factors of *ākāṅkṣa* (the psychological or syntactic expectancy), *yogyatā* (consistency) and

saṃnidhi (continuity) among the word-meanings in a sentence as constituting the bases of the unity of the sentence; the important role played by *tātparya* or the general purport of the passage as understood from contextual factors or the intention of the speaker was also taken note of. According to this associationistic approach, taking as primary units, the words and their isolated meanings, it is necessary to point out the cementing factors which bring about the syntactic unity among the various isolated items to form a sentence. Of the many cementing factors which help to make the sentence-wall out of the word-bricks, ākāṅkṣā is the most important and all-comprehensive.

The first mention of a Mīmāṃsā type of definition of the sentence seems to be in the *Kātyāyana Śrautā sūtra*: (1. 3. 2) *vākyam nirākāṅkṣam* 'A sentence is that which is *nirākāṅkṣa*', that is to say "something which has no requirement or expectation of words outside itself to complete its meaning. It is explained as *mithaḥ sambandha* or "mutual relationship" among the word-meanings in the sentence. It is in the *Mīmāṃsāsūtras* of Jaimini that we first came across the real definition of a sentence or *vākya*:

arthaikatvād ekaṃ vākyam sākāṅkṣam ced vibhāge syāt (2. 1 46). "So long as a single purpose is served by a number of words, which on being separated are found to be wanting and incapable of effecting the said purpose, they from one syntactic unit one complete *mantra*". This principle of *ekavākyatā* or syntactic unit was evolved by the Mīmāṃsakas while dealing with the prose passages in the *Yajurveda* where it was sometimes found difficult to ascertain how far a certain sentence extended. Śabara in his *Bhāṣya* explains the sūtra as referring to the Vedic *mantras* only, and the term *arthaikatva* is interpreted in the sense of serving a single purpose "*ekaprayojanatvād upapannam*".

It was felt that this principle of *arthaikatva* was capable of a much more extended application. Bharṭhari refers to this sūtra as one of the well-known definitions of a sentence:

sākāṅkṣāvayavam bhede parānākāṅkṣaśabdakam /
karmapradhānam guṇavad ekārtham vākyam iṣyete. //
(*Vākyapadiya* II. 4)

Both Kumārilabhaṭṭa and Prabhākara admit that it is possible to explain the term *arthaikatva* as "unity of meaning"; but reject that view in favour of the *Śabarabhāṣya* where the unity of purpose is emphasized. *Bṛhatī* explains: *prayojana vācyo'yam arthaśabdaḥ parigṛhyate, napratipādyavācī.*

Even in the ancient grammatical tradition we find a similar condition about the necessity for interdependence of words to give a unified sense for a compound word or a sentence Pāṇini's sūtra II. 1. 1 *Samarthaḥ padavidhiḥ* says that *samarthya* or the capacity of words for mutual association is a necessary condition for words to form a compound word. This term *sāmarthya* is later interpreted by Kātyāyana and Patānjali in various ways. According to some *sāmarthya* means *vyapekṣā* or mutual connection pertaining to the meanings of words which is similar to the condition of *ākāṅkṣā* given by the Mīmāṃsakas; according to some others *sāmarthya* is explained as *ekārthībhāvā* or unification of meaning, that is to say the different words with different meanings are made to signify a unified sense. This latter view is similar to the condition of *arthaikatva* given by Jaimini, if explained as "unity of sense".

Pāṇini discusses compound words, whereas Jaimini deals with the sentence, still the conditions referred to seem similar. Patañjali explains the two conditions as mutually exclusive and accepts *ekārthībhāva* point of view as the correct one. Kaiyaṭa gives the two as conditions for a sentence and a compound word respectively Haradatta points out that both conditions are necessary even for a compound word.

For the Mīmāṃsakas *ākāṅkṣā* is a psychological expectancy rather than a syntactic one. Bhartṛhari is right in pointing out that the Mīmāṃsā definition of a *vākya* would imply that a passage of several gammatical sentences can be considered a single *vākya* if there is *ākaṅkṣā* and unity of

sense. Kumārila says that several independent sentences can combine to form a *Mahāvākya* on the same basis of serving a single purpose.

svārthabodhe samāptānām aṅgāṅgitvādyapekṣayā /
vākyānām ekavākyatvam punaḥ saṃhatya jāyate //
Tantravārttika, P.366

The grammarian's definition of a sentence as *ekātiṅ* is first proposed by Kātyāyana. Pāṇini does not seem to subscribe to the view, for the term *atiṅaḥ* in the sūtra *tiṅatiṅaḥ* suggests that Pāṇini was accepting as a single sentence even passages containing more than one finite verb. *paśya mṛgo dhāvati* "see the deer runs" will be a single *vākya* according to him. Bhartṛhari makes the distinction quite clear:

ekatiṅ yasya vākyam tu śāstre nihitalakṣaṇam /
sākāṅkṣāvayavam tena na tulyam //
Vakyapadiya II

Later grammarians and the logicians accepted *ākāṅkṣā* as syntactic expectancy, while to the Mīmāṃsakas it remained a psychological one.

Ākaṅkṣā consists in a word not being able to convey a complete sense in the absence of another word; literally it is the desire on the part of the listener to know the other relevant words and their meanings to complete the sense. The *akaṅkṣā* may seem to depend on the intention of the speaker or the expectation of the listener. Every action implies an agent, an instrument, a place of action etc., but the *kārakas* need not always be stated. "Bring the pot" can raise, but need not raise, the question as to who made the pot and who was the potter's father. In the case of an injunctive sentence like *gām ānaya daṇḍena* "bring the cow with a stick", even the phrase "with a stick" is unnecessary, if the speaker is not particular as to how the cow is brought. Here the term *daṇḍena* "with a stick has an" *ākaṅkṣā* towards the action of bringing but not *vice versa*. In the case of *ghāṭam anaya* ("bring the pot") the *akaṅkṣā* is mutual; but

in the previous example it is one sided. Besides the normal *utthitākāṅkṣā*, there is also the potential *utthāpyākāṅkṣā* (as in the case of the name of the potter's father etc.).

As far as the Mīmāsṃakas are concerned they are interested only in injunctive sentenceds. The Bhāṭṭa school believes in three basic *ākāṅkṣas*: *itikartavyatā* what is to be done, *sādhana* or *karaṇa* the means of doing it and *phala* the fruit of action. Instead of *phala* or fruit, the Prābhākara school believes in the *niyojya* or the person who is enjoined to perform the action as the third *ākāṅkṣa* The *Bhagavadgītā* passage *Karmaṇy evādhikāras te mā phaleṣu kadācana* seems to support the Prābhākara view. A law is a law; it must be obeyed not out of fear of punishment or the temptation of some reward, but simply because it is a law.

To the primary condition of *ākāṅkṣā* mutual expectancy were added two more by the Mīmāṃsakas: *yogyatā* consistency of sense and *Āsatti* or *Saṃnidhi* which stands for the contiguity of the words. *Yogyatā* is the logical compatibility or consistency of the words in a sentence for mutual association. Really it involves judgement on the sense of nonsense of a sentence. In an expression *agninā siñcati* "he wets it with fire", there is no *yogyatā* sinee the idea of wetting is something incongruous with that of fire. Kumārilabhaṭṭa says that incompatibility with actual facts does not prevent verbal comprehension, but only the validity of the mutual knowledge. Perhaps it is the inconceivability of the association of the word meanings that renders the whole sentence nonsensical, and not the lack of correlation with the actual facts. The impossibility of connecting the word meanings stands in the way of verbal comprehension. But a sentence like "there are fruits on the tree on the banks of the river" is normal, and does not lack *yogyatā* even if there are no fruits on the tree. False statements are syntactically normal.

This condition of *yogyatā* for a sentence is analogoua to the modern concept of the anomalous sentence. If one

of the lexical items arrived at by the componential analysis of a word in a sentence prevents its co-occurrence with another word in it, it becomes anomalous. Accoading to Katz-Foder theory "if the co-occurrence restrictions for one of the lexical items in a sentence prevents its occurrence with any sense of the other lexical items in the sentence, the sentence receives no reading and is called an malous". A phrase like "bachelor mother" or sentences like "the square is foolish" seems to be meaningless because of such contradictions. The phrase "a square circle" may also be given as an example for the absence of *yogyatā*.

If, however, such anomaly can be explained away by resorting to a figurative or metaphoric interpretation, the sentence may be accepted as correct, since the incompatability of the expressed sense is an essential condition for *lakaṣaṇā* or transfer A metaphoric sentence and a normal sentence cannot be distinguished by their syntactic form; and among the grammarians, syntactically here is no differenec between the two sentences 'Jack is a boy' and "Jack is an ass". All metaphoric sentences are semantically deviant but syntactically normal.

The third condition *āsatti* is generally explained as the condition that the word in a sentence should be contiguous in time. It is the uninterrupted utterance, or the unbroken comprehension of words when they are in juxtaposition. Kumārilabhaṭṭa says that it is the continuous moving about of the words in the mind of the listener (*buddhau viparivṛtti*). The Prābhākaras also accept the same view.

The lack of contiguity can be in two ways- not being uttered together, and not being signified by words. The Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas hold that verbal cognition is possible only when the necessary words are together in the mind; the Prābhākaras, on the other hand, consider that only the contiguity of cognition of the sense is necessary. Thus in the case of elliptical sentences the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas want the missing words to be actually supplied. The Prābhākaras hold that it is easier to supply the elliptical

meaning than to presume the missing words as implied.

The role of *tātparya* or the general purport of the passage as understood from the contextual factors is accepted as a motivating force, but not as a separate power (*Śakti*) by the Mīmāṃsakas. Even in metaphoric transfer, the role of *tātparya* has been accepted as a motivating factor.

From the analytical point of view a sentence has to be considered as a collection of words. While trying to comprehend the meaning of the sentence from the point of view of the listener, different approaches are possible. The individual words convey their primary meaning; but the sentence meaning is a unified one. The conditions necessary for their giving a connected meaning have already been noted as *ākāṅkṣā*, *yogyatā* and *saṃnidhi*. Still the exact nature of the relationship between the wordmeanings and the sentence meaning has to be examined. The two main theories most prominently discussed are the *anvitābhidhnavāda* advocated by the Prābhākaras and the *abhihitānvaya vāda* held by the Bhāṭṭas. Both Kumārila and Prabhākara held following Sabara's standpoint that words have their individual meanings; but while Prabhākara denied that words convey a meaning excepting the context of a sentence, Kumārila bhaṭṭa held that it is the isolated word-meanings that later combine to form the sentence meaning. The Prābhākaras held that the words in a sentence directly convey their isolated word-meanings and the syntactic element as well.

The meaning of a sentence is made up of the individual word-meanings and their mutual relation. Can both these elements be conveyed by the words ? Prābhākaras say that the intention or purport as known from contextual factors will make the primary denotative power of the words convey both. But the Bhāṭṭas hold that the primary denotative power of words is exhausted by conveying their isolated individual meanings, and stop with that. The connected meaning is conveyed, acc rding to them, through the

secondary power *lakṣṇā* of the sentence. The individual meaning is a universal, but in the sentence the meaning has to apply to the inividual.

Prābhākaras lay stress on the natural process by which children learn their mother tongue. It is by watching the usage of language in daily life and witnessing the activity of elders on hearing sentences that children come to know the significance of words. Through the subconscious individual substitution method, they come to know the meaning of a word. Later the children begins to understand the meaning of even new sentences. But from the worldly activity he knows that words are never used in isolation, but have meaning only in the cont xt of a sentence. The constituent words in a sentence convey meaning only as they are related to the sentence meaning. Thus in the sentence "Bring the cow" the word *cow* means not the isolated concept *cowness*, but cow as related to the action of bringing. So also the word "bring" means the action of bringing in relation to the cow. The words themselves give their own meanings and their syntactic relation; so the sentence meaning is directly conveyed by the sentence.

This view is rejected by the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas because of the fallacy of interdependence and complexity. According to them we are able to understand the individual meanings of words, even though we might have learned them by hearing people utteri.g sentence and watching their reaction. Unlike the words, the sentence does not have individual meaning of its own. When we hear a sentence we have first an understanding of the separate meanings of the word one after another; then these wordmeanings are related on the basis of expectancy etc. and we arrive at the unified meaning of the sentence as a whole. This association of the word meanings is brought about by resorting to *lakṣaṇā* according to the Mīmāṃsakas. Śabara's words seem to be in favour of the Bhāṭṭa view.

padāni svam svam artham abhidhāya nivṛttavyāpārāṇi ; athe dānīm padārthāḥ avagatāḥ santaḥ vākyārtham avagamayanti

Discussions on the nature of the relation between word meanings and sentence-meaning were going on from very early times; and the two main theories ascribed to Prābhākaras and Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, appear in different forms even much earlier in the list of sentence definitions given by Bhartṛhari at the beginning of the second canto of his *Vākyapadīya.*

In his *bhāṣya* Śabara refers to two views on sentence-meaning, that it is either *bheda* or *samsarga*. These views are given in Kātyāyana's *vārttika* and Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* also and are ascribed to Vyāḍi and Vājāpyāyana respectively· Vājāpyāyana seems to have been a Mīmāṃsaka: he held that the meaning of a word is the universal or *jāti* and that the sentence meaning is the mutual association or *Saṃsarga* of the word meanings. Thus the expression "white cow", *Śuklo gauḥ*, meant, according to him the association of whiteness and cowness. *gotve śuklatvasaṃsargaḥ, śuklatve vā gotvasaṃsargaḥ*. In such cases the Bhāṭṭa school believes that the sense of the individual is got from the universal through *lakṣaṇā* metaphoric transfer), while according to the Prābhākaras, it is *ākṣepa* or implication since both the universal and the particular are perceived by the same cognition (*vyakteḥ jāti-(samānasaṃvitsaṃvedyatvāt*). Vyāḍi on the other hand, held that the wordmeaning is a substance (dravya) and that in a sentence the role of the word is the preclusion of other possible things Thus in "the white cow" the term "white" is to preclude all cows that are not white and the term "cow" is to preclude all white things other than the cows Thus through mutual preclusion the idea of the white cow is obtained. This theory of Vyāḍi seems to be a fore runner of the Buddhist Apoha theory, generally ascribed to Dignāga. Vājapyāyana's theory appears later in the Navyanyāya school as *Saṃsargamaryādā*.

The Mīmāṃsā school held that the finite verb (which is an injunctive ordaining a *vidhi* or *niṣedha*) is the central element

in a sentence. It consists of two factors, the verbal root (*dhātu* and the verbal suffix (namely, the potential *liṅ* suffix). Of these two the Mīmāṃsakas held that the verbal suffix is semantically more important than the root. The verbal suffix denotes *bhāvanā* or "efficient force" which is defined as "that activity which brings something into being (*bhavituḥ bhāvanukūlo bhāvakavyāpāraviśeṣaḥ*) "the operation of the operator conducive to the production of the result". This again is of two kinds- *śābdī bhāvanā* and *ārthī bhāvanā*. The injunctive sentence induces the hearer to do some action. This is denoted by the suffix *liṅ*; this is the *śābdī bhāvanā*. The *ārthī bhāvanā* is based on this and is the activity of the agent leading to the result Immediately on hearing a command the listener has a feeling that he must do something; this is the *śābdī bhāvanā*; what that something is will be the *ārthī bhāvanā* indicated by the root-meaning of the injunctive verb. According to Maṇḍanamiśra's *Bhāvanāviveka, bhāvanā* is the absence of inactivity in general *audāsīnyavicchittisāmānyarūpā*. The sentence produces some sort of urge in the mind of the listener to do some activity.

According to the Naiyāykas, the centre of organization of the sentencemeaning is the agent. On hearing a sentence *caitraḥ viṣṇum bhajati*' The understanding as *Śābdabodha* as the part of the listener is विष्णुकर्मक प्रीत्यनुकूल कृतिमान् चैत्र: (Caitra in the locus of an action having Viṣṇu as its object and intended to please him) According to the grammarians who concide the operational activity or *vyāpāra* as the centre of organization of the sentence meaning, the same sentence gives the *Śābdabodha* thus. चैत्रकर्तृकवर्तमानकालीनविष्णुकर्मकप्रीत्यनुकूलव्यापार (an activity taking place in the present time for the purpose of pleasing Viṣṇu in which Caitra is the agent and Viṣṇu the object)

The Mīmāṃsakas accepted the principle of binary relationship in language as the ideal one *anyāyyam anekaśabdatvam* and *anyayyaścānekārthatvam*; but they recognized the existence of exceptions, since the language actually contained

instances of polysemie-synonyms, homonyms and homophones. Words like *hasta* and *kara* had to be taken as synonyms for both meant "the hand", it is impossible to trace the word from the other. In the case of corrupt words, their relation to the correct words is recognized, and according to one school of thought they convey their meaning only by reminding the listener about the correct forms; and the real denotative power is vested in the correct words. But sometimes the corrupt forms became popular in society, and people get the meanings directly, then that fact had also to be recognized.

Even when the binary relationship between a word and its meaning is accepted, the role of contextual factor in deciding the exact meaning of a term has to be recognized. The contextual factors can be those based on the context of situation as well as those based on the collection of other words in the case of sentence. The role of contextual factors in the ambiguous expressions is recognized by all; even in the case of ordinary sentences contextual factors play a prominent role. Apparent mistakes can be easily avoided with its help, *aśvam ālabheta* means "sacrifice a horse"; if pronounced wrongly as *asvam ālabheta,* the literal meaning will be "sacrifice a poor man", but contextual factors will prevent such an idea being entertained.

The Mīmāṃasakas were forced to develop the theory of metaphoric transfer to interpret the Vedic passages in a cogent manner. Besides *abhidhā* or the primary significance power of words, they accepted two types of metaphoric transfer, one called *gauṇī* in which the transfer is effected on the basis of the common quality or similarity between the primary referent and the actual referent. The boy is a lion (*siṃho māṇavakaḥ*) "the boy is a fire brand" (*agnir māṇavakaḥ*) and "jack is an ass" can be given as examples. Here it is the common quality that is involved. The Buddhist opponents of the Mīmāṃsakas also accept Gauṇī Vṛtti. Dharmakīriti says,

yatra *rūḍhyā'* tadartho'pi śabdaḥ svārthe prayujyate /
sa mukhyas tadguṇaprāpto gauṇo yatra skhaladgatiḥ //

The primary meaning is that which is got directly and immediately through common usage or *rūḍhi*; that obtained indirectly and mediately, through the quality, is *gauṇa*. The term *Skhaladgatiḥ* "with tottering step" is taken from Dharmakīrti and used by Ānandavardhana while describing metaphoric transfers in language, "*yaṃ uddiśya phalam tatra śabdo naiva skhalad gatiḥ*. Ānanda says that in the case of intentional metaphors used by poets, the power of *lakṣaṇā* or metaphor helps in getting the actual meaning, but the purpose that prompted the metaphoric transfer is got immediately and come under suggestion and no *lakṣaṇā*.

When the relation between the primary refe-ent and the actual referent is different from similarity - such as contiguity etc., it is called pure *lakṣaṇā* by the Mīmāṃsakas. According to the other schools of thought these two form two subdivisions of *lakṣaṇā*. Metaphoric transfer is resorted to when there is a resistance or inconsistency if the words are taken in their literal senses. This incompatability can be either impos-ibility or unsuitability- *anvayānupapatti* or *tātparyānupapptti*. When a boy is asked to see that crows do not eat the food, he knows that he should not allow even a dog to eat it, though he is aware that the term is *crow*.

In the Vedic texts, there are several passages which have to be taken metaphorically. A passage like *āditya yūpaḥ* "the sacrificial post (to which the animal is tied) is the sun" becomes meaningful only if interpreted to mean "the sacrificial post must be as bright as the sun"; perhaps it may also mean that it should be tall". A procession of people many of them carrying umbrellas may be referred to as "a procession of umbrella- bearers", though many of them may not have umberllas. In literature also "sky scrapers", or mansions touching or kissing the sky or obstructing the path of the sun and the moon only mean tall buildings. Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri once remarked that whlie interpreting inscriptional evidence we have to be cautious. "All the buildings in

the king's capital were made of gold' found in an inscription actually proves only that there were buildings in the city and that gold was a precious metal. When a poet compares the breasts of the heroine to a mountain, or even a pot, no reader takes it in the literal sense.

Even a normal explicit sentence can be interpreted in different ways; but the proper interpretation that is accepted should be one that is suitable in the context. The sentence *Brāhmaṇo na hantavyaḥ*, 'A Brahmin should not be killed' does not mean that all female Brahmins should be killed or that all male Brahmins except one should be killed. Here the masculine gender and the singular number are not significant. It refers to the class of Brahmins. Negative sentence of this type refer to the class. But positive sentences like *gāṃ ānaya*, 'bring a cow', refer only to the particular, and the intended meaning is that a single cow should be brought.

When a crying child is told by its mother "If you continue to cry, I will throw you out to the tiger", even the child knows that no such thing will be done, and that what the mother means is that it should not cry. If a Vedic passage commands the performance of a sacrificial ritual lasting for 1000 years, it has to be interpreted as refering to 1000 days (if not 1000 hours). The principle of *Arthavāda*, together with the theories of metaphoric tranfer (*lakṣṇā and ganuṇī*) can look after all contradictions and absurdities in the Vedic statements; for the basic standpoint of the Mīmāṃsakas is that the Vedic statements are aothoritative. If they do not accept *Vyañjanā* as a separate function, it is because metaphor can look after suggestion also.

In India the Mīmāṃsakas were interested in interpreting the utterances to get the intended meaning, or *tātparya*, objectively, using the rules of interpretation and considering the utterance in their situational contexts. The Mīmāṃsā rules were accepted in legal interpretations; whether a rule of law is obligatory, semi-obligatory or optional is to be decided

through interpretation. Some of the rules of interpretation accepted by Hindu Law are the following:-

1. When a sentence is complete and explicit in sense and grammar, no attempt should be made to twist its meaning.
2. When an expression has more than one meaning, and the normal meaning does not agree with the context, its meaning is to be determined by the context.
3. When words or sentences are not explicitly or clearly connected, they should be connected in accordance with grammatical rules so as to form a meaningful sentence.
4. When a sentence or a clause by itself does not make any complete sense, it should be considered elliptical and necessary words must be added to make a complete sense, suitable to the context.

Communication consists in the Speaker A expressing the sentence S containing the thought-content T, and the listener B on hearing the sentence S grasping the thought-content T. The grasping is possible without any conscious interpretation on the part of the listener, in the case of well known sentences, especially short ones in common use. No interpretation is involved in this grasping. This is the Fregean model, and is analogous to the Sphoṭa theory of Bhartṛhari. It is just like perception.

The other model, which may be called the Pierce Davidson model, lacks the motion of grasping. Here the listener has to interpret the sentence to understand what the speaker intended to convey by his utterance. This is analogous to the Mīmāṃsā position.

According to Miller communication has as its central interest those behaviourial structures in which a source transmits a message to the receiver with conscious intent to affect 'the latters' behaviour. The Mīmāṃsā view, especially the Prābhākara view, is very similar. Sentences are uttered to

suggest a possible course of actions. The ultimate aim is to influence the mind of the listener to do some action, not merley to convey an idea or a matter of fact. If sentences are divided into propositional statements and imperative commands, the latter type is obviously to influence the listener to do some action. But according to the Mīmāṃsakas, especially the Prābhākaras, even the former type of declaratory statements are ultimately intended to influence the mind of the listener to do some action, and are meaningful only if interpreted that way. The Mīmāṃsakas refuse to accept that there can be communication and understanding even without any intention on the part of the speaker to influence the practical behaviour of the hearer and without any such actual influence.